

PRESIDENT: Senator DeCamp. Is Senator DeCamp in the chamber? Did you wish to speak on Senator Simon's amendment? Alright, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature. I don't know what it is that Senator Barnett wants, but I certainly do think that his comments during the discussion of Senator Simon's amendment are not well taken. What we are doing with Senator Simon's amendment is endorsing what the Legislature has already thought that it had done before. All he is asking is that this amendment which corrects what was attempted before should be adopted. This amendment, the essence of it has already been accepted by the legislature. This amendment will make certain that what we did the first time around is in fact done. I still find it difficult to discuss just the amendment because there are matters related to the death penalty and the state extinguishing the life of its citizens which are hard for me to grasp. Some of you have read religious history and know about the huge number of burnings at the stake. The vicious tortures committed in the name of religion. Well these were just forerunners of Belson, Auschwitz, the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and those things did not do anything to elevate the respect that anybody had for human life. In 1977 America, what is done in the nation who on its money stamps "In God we trust", who on its postage which it sends around the world has the same thing. What is this country doing when it results to hangings, shootings, gassings, and electrocutions? All that the electric chair is, is an upgrading of the burning at the stake. Without the flame. You know that electricity can cook on a stove. The electric chair may appear cleaner but when the temperature of the body is raised tremendously, when smoke emits from the body, when the flesh burns and the stench of burning flesh pervades the execution room, then we know that a human being is being burned at the modern stake. During the Old Testament offering human sacrifices to Moloch was a capital offense. Well what kind of God is being served when people are burned to death as human living sacrifices? The death penalty is the only punishment in this country which involves the knowing and the intentional infliction of physical and mental agony for the sake of the infliction of the agony. The victim who was killed can not be restored to life. When Gary Gillmore was killed, the only reason that any of us know his name is because of the circus carnival atmosphere that surrounded his execution. There were reporters who wanted to hover over the execution site in a helicopter. There are the Tee shirts with the target over the heart and the slogan "Lets do it" which are being circulated in various parts of the country now. Here was an insane man who needed treatment who nevertheless was destroyed under a law whose constitutionality is suspect. Here is a man who pushed the criminal justice system into a corner and made it do that which no individual ought to be allowed to make a state do. As a result of Gillmore's execution can anyone say that there is a higher regard for human life?

PRESIDENT: One minute Senator.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Has the law been vindicated? Has society been respected? Has any of the hatred been diminished? Any of the fear that led to this thing been dissipated? All that has happened is that a living human being has been reduced to a corpse and follows the long line of corpses stretching from Calvary where Christ hung on the cross to 1977 United States of America and it ought not to be. If we take Senator Simon's amendment though, all we are doing